

Story #250 (Tape #8, Summer 1970) Narrator: Ali Şengül, kapıcı at National Forestry Station

Location: Collected at Kızılcacahamam, where informant worked; but informant was native of Pazar Köy, kaza of Mengen, Province of Bolu--about 50 km. northeast of Bolu

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The Lame Ram Teaches His Master a Lesson

Once a long time ago there was a man named Avcı Mehmet. He spent all his time hunting, which was his occupation. He had a family, but he was poor. He did nothing but hunt. On a certain day this man went hunting. Sometime during his hunt he saw two snakes fighting with each other. One of the snakes seemed to be on the verge of strangling the other when Avcı Mehmet could no longer bear it and so he shot with his gun the snake about to win.

transformed
The other snake shook itself and became a girl. She spoke to the hunter: "O hunter, you have saved my life and now you can wish from me whatever you want. I am the daughter of the Padişah of Fairies and I shall take you to his palace. You have saved my life, and I must take you to my father." She took him to the palace.

The father said, "Wish what you will from me."

Mehmet answered, "I wish only your good health, *formulate* your majesty."

my son," said the Padişah of Fairies. "Wish something from me.

What use is my good health to you?"

single object There was a magic ring on the finger of the Padişah of Fairies about which the girl had already spoken to the hunter. She had told him that when her father, for the third time, insisted that he wish something, he should ask for his ring. So when the Padişah of Fairies asked for the third time, "What is your wish?" Avcı Mehmet said, "I would like your ring, your majesty."

It was very hard for the padişah to give up his ring, but as the young man had saved his daughter's life, he had to give the magic ring to him. When Avcı Mehmet wore this ring on his finger, he began to know everything on earth and in heaven. The ring revealed everything to him.

Avcı Mehmet continued his journey and one day he came upon some shepherds who were sleeping in the forest and who showed him hospitality, and accepted him as their guest. When the sheep were put in the fold for the night, the shepherds made a fire and they had Avcı Mehmet sit and eat with them. The shepherds had killed a sheep in honor of their guest. While they were busy over the sheep, the howl of a wolf was heard from the distance. As we all know, a wolf howls. The wolf had seen that the shepherds were killing a sheep and knew that they would soon eat the meat, drink water, and go to sleep. In the meantime, when the flock moved in his direction, the wolf thought, "I shall kill as many sheep as I can." But, of course, the magic ring informed Avcı Mehmet of the wolf's intention, though the shepherds were not aware of what was to happen.

There was a very, very old sheep dog with no teeth left in his mouth with that flock. This old sheep dog said to himself, "If this guest is a good man, he will give me a piece of the meat of the slaughtered sheep and I would strangle the wolf." The sheep was skinned and Avcı Mehmet cut a piece from the best side and gave the old dog more than he expected. After eating and drinking, they all went to bed. When they awoke during the night, they saw no sign of the flock. All the sheep were gone. Only a lame ram and a lame ewe were left. The shepherds started crying, "O terrible! Our flock was destroyed by a wolf." But soon they discovered that the old dog had strangled the wolf. They brought together what was left of the flock and put them in the fold.

The shepherds said to Avci Mehmet, "You are a very honest man, so we want to give you some sheep and goats, because you saved our flock from danger."

"No, I would never accept such a thing," said Avci Mehmet.

"Yes, we want you to," the shepherds insisted.

Finally, he could resist no more and so he accepted the lame ram and the lame ewe, saying, "These two will be plenty for me."

He took them to his land and became very wealthy as these sheep increased and became a large flock, and he is still wealthy. He had many servants and built many palaces. He and his two sons lived magnificently. But his wife one day said, "No, we cannot do this. You cannot go on in this manner. You will have to tell me about this magic power that you possess."

Jaboo — against revealing source of magic power

Mehmet knew that if he revealed this magic he would die. But finally one day, not able to stand his wife's nagging any longer, he decided to tell her about it. But before he did this, he proceeded to divide his flock among his children. (In those days, people used to divide a sheep flock by throwing a stick into the middle of the flock. Wherever the stick fell, they would divide the flock.) When he threw the stick, the flock divided into two, with the lame ram on one side and the lame ewe on the other.

The ewe said to the ram, "Come over on this side."

The ram said to the ewe, "I will not be led by the word of a woman as Avci Mehmet is. You come over to this side."

Mehmet heard this talk between the two sheep and was very sorry for himself. He again joined the two parts of the flock together, went home, and gave his wife a good beating. Of course, he never mentioned to her now what the magic power was.

Then they lived happily ever afterwards.